

REASONS

Most humbly offer'd for passing the Saltpetre Bill.

*Their Majesties
Stores almost
spent.*

THE Commissioners of the Ordnance affirm, That they have but 70 Tuns of Salt-petre in Their Majesties Stores; whereas the Stores used to be 1000 Tuns; besides it is notorious that the King has bought great Quantities of Gunpowder of the Dutch since the War.

*The Scarcity
and great
Price.*

The general want of Saltpetre in the Nation is evident from the excessive price it has been usually sold for a Year last past, which is 160 *l.* the Tun, almost three times more than what it has been formerly sold for here, or may be bought for in *Holland*.

*The Inconveni-
ences to Mer-
chants, &c.
12. C. 2d.*

Merchants and Privateers pay more by Two Thirds for Gunpowder than they would do, if Saltpetre were Imported, and Gunpowder being now at above 5 *l.* the Barrel is prohibited exportation; wherefore we cannot supply our own Plantations in the *West-Indies* with Gunpowder.

*Glass-men, Re-
finers, Dyers.*

Glass-men, Refiners, and Dyers, make much use of it in their Trades, and by reason of the great Price of Saltpetre, and because it cannot be Imported, great Quantities of *Aqua-fortis* made of Saltpetre is daily Imported from *Holland*, Silver sent thither to be separated from Gold, Cloath to be Coloured, and the Price of our Glass raised, so that the Dutch will be able to under sell us.

Gunpowder.

These three Trades in *London* only, consumes Yearly 300 Tuns.

The *English* have the Advantage of the Dutch in making Gunpowder by reason of their Water-Mills, which the Dutch want, which is so considerable, that Gunpowder is always cheaper (in *England*) by one third than Saltpetre, but dearer in *Holland* for this Reason, if Saltpetre were Imported, we might sell Gunpowder cheaper than the Dutch, and furnish not only our own Plantations, but other Countries, which at present are supplied from *Holland*.

Note.

This last Year the Officers of Their Majesties Ordnance have been forc'd to pay 10 *l.* per Barrel for all the Powder was wanted at *Barbadoes* and other Islands, 'tis believed the same is now much dearer there, for they can have no Supply from hence at the Price Saltpetre is at.

The Opposers of the Bill are the East-India Company, and the Patentees for making Saltpetre in England.

The *East-India* Company by their Petition to the House of Commons acknowledge they have no more than 100 Tuns in *England*, but offer in case of the non-arrival of their expected Ships with Saltpetre, That They will be obliged to Supply Their Majesties Occasions with Gunpowder upon Reasonable Terms.

The Patentees say they will make quantities sufficient.

As to the *East-India* Company. The quantity they pretend to have, will supply the private occasions of the Nation but a very little time.

What they expect may (as is acknowledged by themselves) never arrive; Then the *East-India* Company must buy Gunpowder of the Dutch (for it will be no where else to be had) to supply the King; which will be ill Husbandry, when besides our losing the Manufacture of the Gunpowder: The Dutch get 50 *l.* per cent more by the Gunpowder, than they do by the Petre which they sell.

The Patentees ought not to be trusted, because they deceived the House of Commons last Session, as appears by their Petition at that time presented, against a Bill of the same Nature with this; when they promised to make a quantity sufficient by *September* last to supply their Majesties and the Tradesmen: Yet have made to this time not above three Tuns, and its suspected, even that little they pretend to have made, was bought in order to carry on their best Trade, Stock-Jobbing. But if they can really make Saltpetre, they may afford to Sell it under 70 *l.* per Tun, and then this Bill will not hurt them.

The Danger of suffering the Publick Stores to be Exhausted, or of having but a small provision of a Commodity, without which we can neither Fight nor Trade, is most Humbly Recommended to the Consideration of this most Honourable House.

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